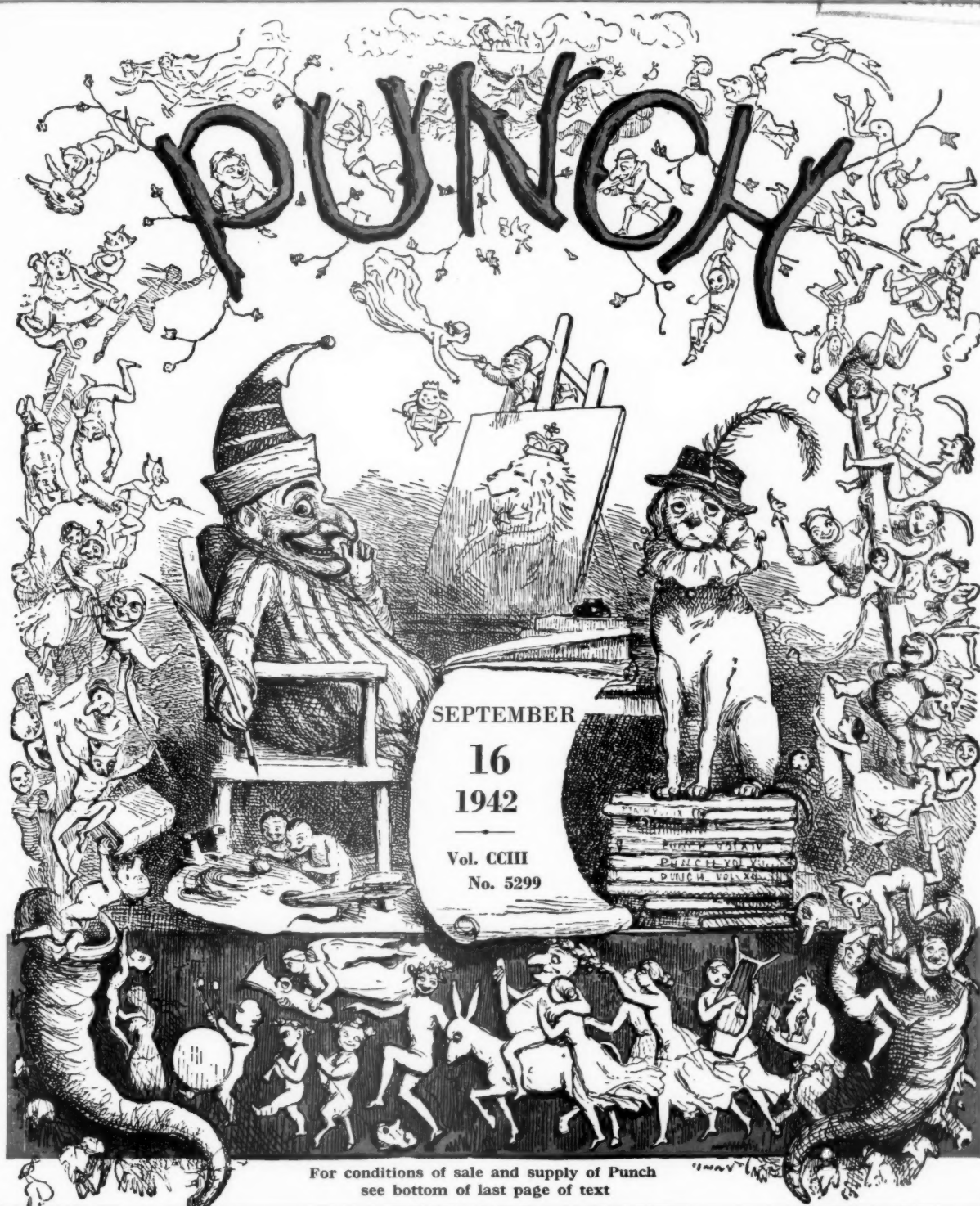


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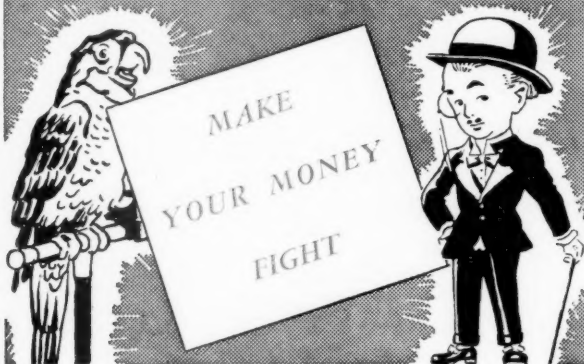
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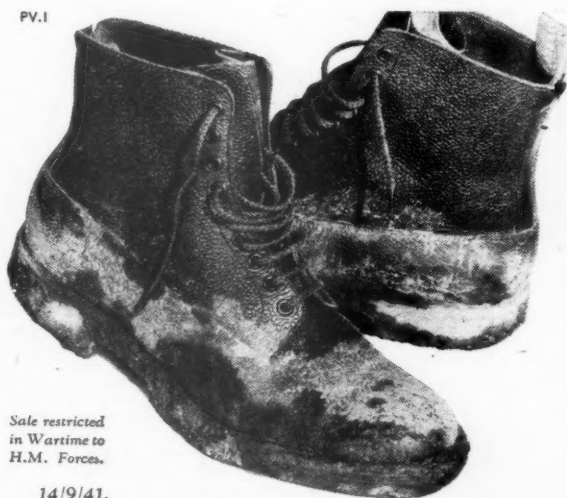
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ago this month. They have been worn regularly throughout  
every winter and have withstood all weathers without the  
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GUARANTEED WATERPROOF

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**Past  
and  
present..**

He sheds his uniform  
and dons his tails, she loses  
her tin helmet and reaches  
for a really frivolous  
'creation'; they forget  
duty and share a pleasure  
... in the aroma of *Balkan  
Sobranie* the nightmare of  
the present fades before  
the dream of the past. And  
who shall blame them?  
Surely they are entitled  
to take one pleasure that  
even war has not changed  
—even if it has made it  
less frequent?



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Sharp razor—hot water—and Parke-Davis Shaving Cream! The recipe for the perfect shave. You can buy Parke-Davis Shaving Cream at any chemist.

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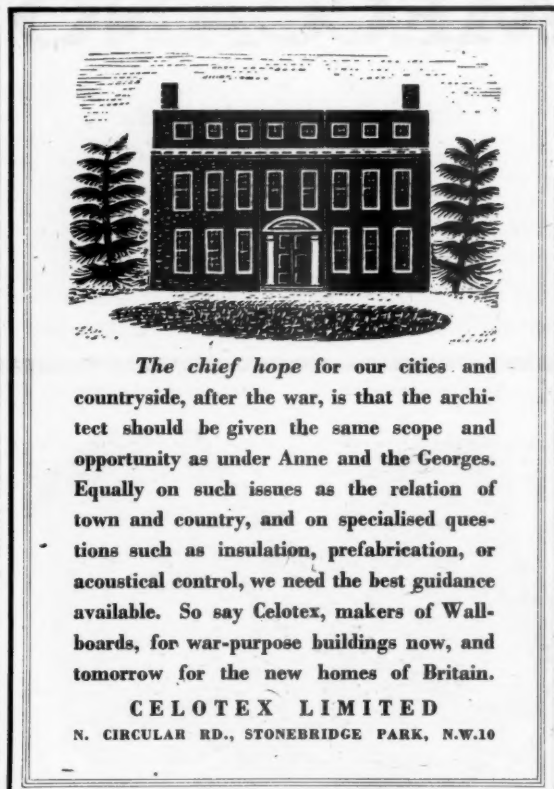
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BIG BEN

RAZOR BLADES

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**"VAN HEUSEN"**  
RECD. COLLARS

for  
*Complete Satisfaction*  
OWING TO EXISTING CONDITIONS  
SUPPLIES ARE VERY RESTRICTED



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PIPE CRAFT

British Made

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EASILY MADE—EASILY DIGESTED. NO SUGAR NEEDED

4 1/2 EACH PER PINT PACKET

3 FLAVOURS  
CARAMEL  
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VANILLA

**ROYAL**  
DESSERT

Equally delicious served HOT or COLD

PRODUCT OF STANDARD BRANDS LTD.

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE  
**RONUK**  
FOR POLISHING FLOORS





## Steady!

—that's the order in these days of shortage.

However tough on your self-restraint, that extra glass simply must be foregone for the duration; which makes it doubly enjoyable, and doubly precious.

**CHAPLINS**  
CELESTA SHERRY 13/6  
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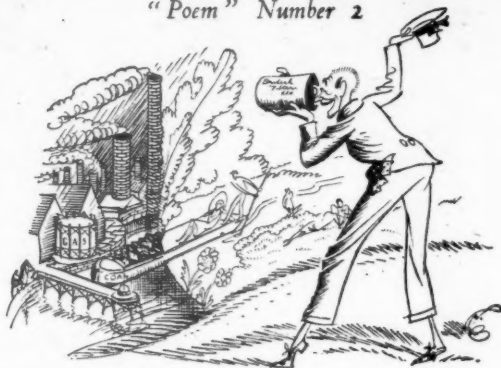


## "The same again"

... after the War Angostura will again be plentiful, to cheer and refresh with its own individuality; but until then, in the National interest, it must be scarce.

255  
**ANGOSTURA**  
BITTERS

## "Poem" Number 2



When Wigan's antediluvian pier I view  
Through filter's spout  
The blossoming flowers & trees come out.

## British Filters Ltd.

Specialists in the removal of foreign matter.  
Aircraft House, Mkt. Harborough.



We Take Pride  
in Introducing

**VAMOUR**  
THE True VERMOUTH

Because "Vamour" is a quality Vermouth. Genuine choice wines and health giving herbs are blended into a real Vermouth, which provides the ideal aperitif or with added ingredients, a delightful cocktail.

Unfortunately supplies are restricted — if you are fortunate enough to get a bottle, treat it with care.



Produced by  
VERMOUTIERS (London) LTD.  
Sackville House, Piccadilly, W.1

## Sparklets

(Regd. Trade Mark)

### REFILLABLE SYPHON

ALL available supplies are being distributed as evenly as possible throughout the country. Vital National needs have first call on production facilities, so, for the present, "Go easy with the soda".

P.S. Please make use of our Renovation and Repair Service and be as helpful as you can by returning empty Sparklets Bulbs to your supplier — Allowance: "C" size 4d. dozen; "B" size 2d. dozen.

SPARKLETS LTD. (Dept. P).  
LONDON,  
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November 17 1941

PUNCH ALMANACK FOR 1942

## "Mastery"



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MIXTURE



"A TOBACCO TO LIVE FOR"  
Craven Mixture is the "Ardena" Mixture in "My Lady Nicotine," immortalized by Sir J. M. Barrie.  
Double Broad Cut: Extra Mild  
Fine Cut: 2/6 the ounce.

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Full price list on application.

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Women's Services Branches: Aldershot, Bath, Bournemouth, Edinburgh, Leeds, Liverpool, Loughborough, Manchester, Oxford, Southampton.  
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## YOUR WILL

It is easy enough to make a will but regrettably impossible for the testator to see that his wishes are carried out punctiliously and precisely as he intended.

A sure way of avoiding the difficulties which may well beset the amateur executor is to employ the Westminster Bank in this capacity. The testator can be certain that his affairs will be conducted confidentially, efficiently and sympathetically, and that the Bank will act as a strictly impartial referee unaffected by any personal consideration.

A booklet giving particulars of this service may be obtained from any branch of

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### Ask the "mechs"

They'll tell you that the better the workmanship of the small parts the longer the "job" will last. That is why the sturdy shouldered edge, perfectly tempered and finely honed, of your Gillette blade gives you the most economical as well as the best shaving. Important just now...

# Gillette

## SAVES STEEL

Prices including Purchase Tax.

Blue Gillette 1/3 for 5 • Stainless Gillette 1/3 for 5 • Thin Gillette 1/3 for 6

Not too little...

not too much...

but just right

thanks to the  
DOUBLE-DENSE LATHER OF

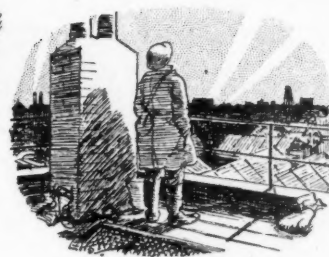
## ERASMIC

## SHAVING STICK



OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCIII No. 5299

September 16 1942

## Charivaria

A WRITER wonders why his baby son keeps trying to put its foot in its mouth. It may be Nature preparing the little man to make both ends meet later on in life.

"HITLER dreads the snow," says a writer. Well, he will be all right ultimately.

It has been pointed out that many modern compositions are based on themes from famous operas. Built-up arias.

Writing to an evening paper, a correspondent wants to know if there is any cure for waking up with a severe headache. Yes. It costs 23s. a bottle and you don't take it.



A theatrical critic objects to scanty clothing in some war-time musical shows. Nothing annoys him more.

"There is a powerful type of personality," says a psychologist, "who can make people be aware of the intensity of his gaze even if he is behind them." He gives us a pane in the neck.

It is claimed of a new aeroplane that it can remain motionless in the air for an indefinite period. This should mean more speed records. The world round it in twenty-four hours.

Antique furniture is very scarce and very expensive. Shortage of labour and raw material.



An eighty-year-old veteran has refused to resign from the Home Guard. His declining years.

"I was glancing through an old volume the other day and noticed how very out-of-date the illustrations were," says a correspondent. An atlas, we suppose.

Recently a news-reel cameraman was arrested in Rome for speaking to MUSSOLINI. We understand that the offender absent-mindedly urged the DUCE to look pleasant.

A Hollywood film actress on a visit to this country says she enjoys a game of bridge. This is not what bridge was meant for.

"British Commando troops, clad only in short stockings and soft woollen hats, threw the German defences into complete confusion."—*Buenos Aires Herald*.

They didn't know which way to look.

A trapper who for the past three years has been isolated in the north of Alaska has just returned to civilization. For want of a better word.



### This Robot Age

"Owner of Maternity Home forced to sell account government restrictions on gasoline permitting only one delivery a day."

Advt. in "*Vancouver News-Herald*."

It is said to be very difficult to make a criminal realize that crime does not pay. Although the lawyer he engages for the defence does his best.



## Another Ghastly Muddle

AS I leaned my bicycle against the tall janitor at the great tank factory at Exe the gates opened and the Chief Production Manager stepped out to greet me.

"I have the car here," he said, and opened the door of a large black limousine to prove it.

"Now," he said, laying a rug across my knees and jumping in after me, "what would you like to see?"

I made my answer without any hesitation whatever. "I should like to see them rolling off the assembly-line," I said.

"Good," he said, and we drove off. For mile after mile we drove through sheds and shops and foundries and canteens. Once we stopped to fill up with petrol, but generally speaking we just drove on. It was a sight that would have made Hitler's blood run cold.

"Here we are at last," said the Production Manager. He was an oldish man with a white moustache, and his head shook a good deal as he spoke. ("I have not been the same," he told me later, "since I was kicked by a horse in '84.")

We got out.

"How often do they roll off?" I asked, gazing in awe at the vast steel cavern from whose mouth a thirty-ton monster, bristling with guns, would at any moment be spewed or belched.

"One every half-hour," said the Manager—"or thereabouts."

When we had waited an hour and fifty minutes I raised my eyebrows.

"Some slight technical hitch," said the old man, and called a passing foreman.

"You're at the wrong end of the line," explained the foreman. "They start 'ere."

"Tut!" said the Manager testily. "I must have been thinking it was Friday."

"They start 'ere on Friday too," said the foreman.

"And Saturday and Sunday and Monday. . ."

"That will do," said the Manager.

We re-entered the car and drove for mile upon mile through canteens, sheds, furnaces and shops. Goering, for all his bravado, would have been struck dumb at the sight.

We reached our destination just in time to see a giant Mark VI roll off the line.

"They carry the new 12-pounder, you know," said the Manager casually, stroking his moustache.

"By Jove!" I cried. "I mustn't miss that."

We got into the car again and drove round to the other side of the tank. But there was no gun to be seen.

"Odd," said the Manager, frowning, and he called up another foreman. "Where's the 12-pounder, Burgess?"

The foreman scratched his head. "Frank Potter puts 'em in, sir," he said. "I'll send for him."

Frank Potter has been with the firm for forty years.

"What did you make before you started making tanks, Frank?" I asked him when he arrived.

"Cisterns," he said almost monosyllabically. "And the name is Potter."

"Never mind that," said the Manager. "Where's the 12-pounder on this?"

Frank Potter made a brief inspection.

"It's a rum go," he said. "We'll have to send for the log."

The progress of every tank from foundry to finished article at this great modern factory is noted down in a special book. In this way a check can be kept to ensure that no important part is missing when the tank is handed over to the military authorities.

Frank Potter ran a competent finger down the columns of the log, and all at once his face cleared.

"See," he said. "She went through my department at 12.45."

"Well?" said the Manager.

"Well, I goes to my lunch at 12.30," said Frank.

"So that's that," said the Manager, turning to me with a smile. "There's always a reason for these things."

"You'll have to put her back on the assembly-line then?" I suggested.

"No, no, sir," said the foreman. "Holds up production. When a tank fails to come up to specification we scrap 'em. Boil 'em down and start again. It's quicker."

How I wished Goebbels could have been there to hear!

"Care to look inside before she's taken away?" said the Manager. "Open her up, Burgess."

"She's screwed down for shipment overseas," said the foreman doubtfully.

"Unscrew her, then," said the Manager.

In an incredibly short space of time the lid was unscrewed and we were peering down into the bowels of the machine. Inside was a very old man holding a chisel. He had a week's growth of beard and he seemed to be in the last stages of exhaustion.

"Who are you?" said the foreman sharply.

"Food!" cried the old man feebly. "Water!"

Food and drink were swiftly brought up on the endless conveyer, and when he had put away his desire of eating and drinking the old man rose to his feet.

"What are you?" said the foreman.

"I am a joiner," said the old man with great dignity.

"What are you joining?" asked the Manager shrewdly.

"Officers' mess furniture," said the old man. (It is an open secret that Rommel has nothing to compare with the internal fittings of our newest tanks.)

Bit by bit we dragged from the veteran joiner a story of calm courage and dogged devotion to duty such as can seldom have had an equal even in the annals of British tank manufacture. He had had a bit of trouble, as he put it (with the characteristic genius of his race for understatement) with the cocktail cabinet in the ante-room and, failing to complete the task in the time allotted, had been carried further and further along the assembly-line. Engines were put in, tracks added, the walls of the Commander's cabin distempered, but still, chisel in hand, he stuck to his post until, before he was aware of it, the lid had been screwed down and he felt himself rolling off the line. "After that," he said simply, "I knew no more until you gentlemen found me."

"There wasn't any more to know," said the Manager kindly.

"Good heavens!" I cried, as a sudden thought struck me.

"If we hadn't unscrewed . . ."

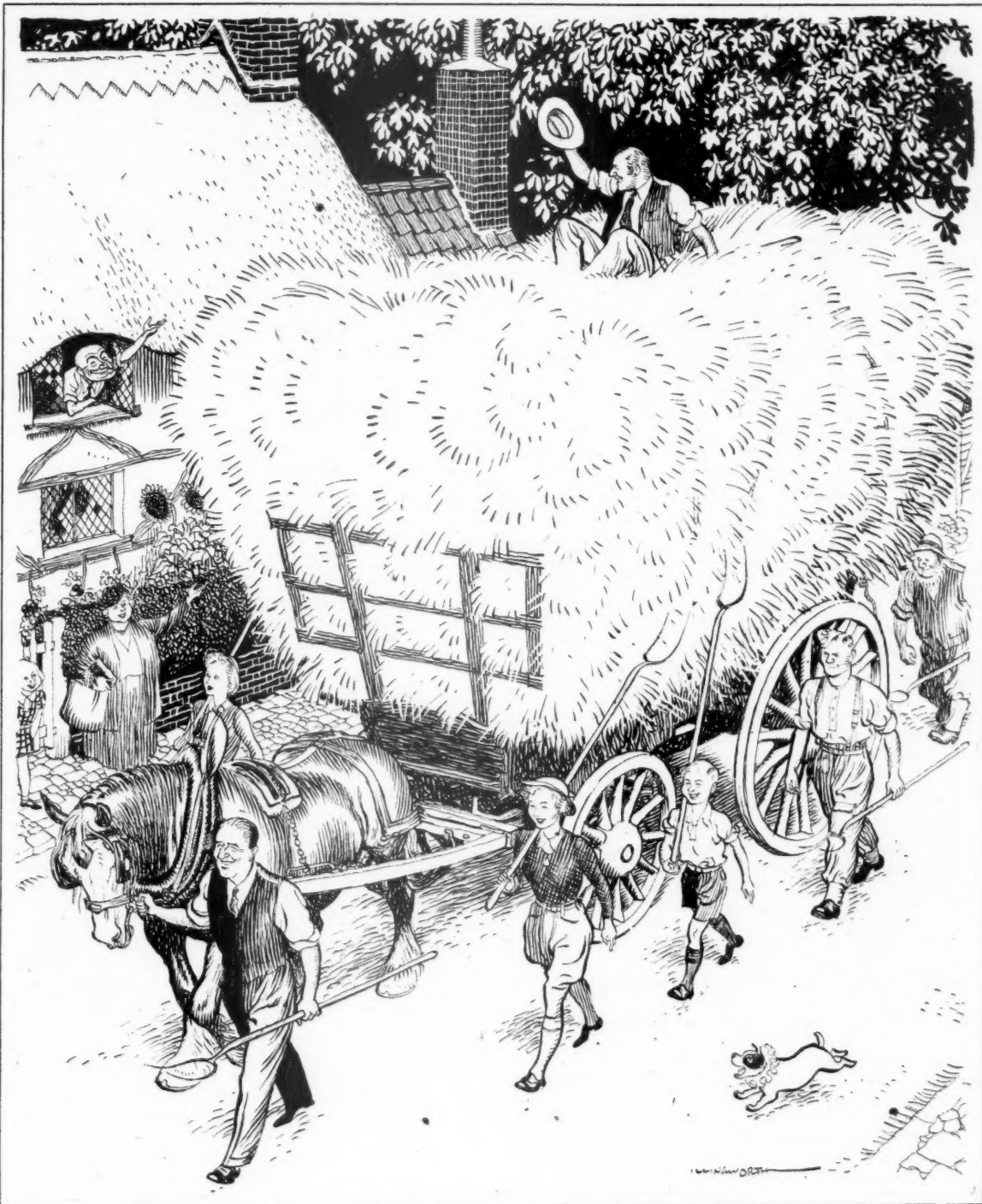
"You're thinking of the boiling-down, no doubt," said the Manager. "There's no need to alarm yourself. There would be very little deposit, very little indeed, eh, Burgess?"

"Not enough to flaw the metal anyway," agreed the foreman.

"And now for the trial range," said the Manager, dismissing the matter from his mind.

A short journey brought us to a vast open arena where two lines of brand-new Mark VIs faced one another at a distance of some two hundred yards.

"Fire!" shouted the Manager, and instantly a murderous



HARVEST HOME



"... and you can tell your General that's MY opinion. This ain't a soldier's war—it's a PEOPLE'S war, this is!"

hail of fire from the deadly 12-pounders swept across the intervening space.

"A fairly thorough test of the armour, I think you'll agree," observed my companion. "If a shell penetrates the armour-plating we scrap the tank."

"And if it doesn't?"

"We scrap the gun."

I was wondering what Himmler would say when another thought struck me.

"But doesn't that cut down the production figures pretty heavily?" I asked.

"Cuts 'em down to nothing," agreed the Manager cheerfully. "But then, you see, we don't make tanks here; at least that isn't our real business."

"What do you make then?" I asked, lowering my voice.

"Rumours," said the Manager. "Great juicy rumours of mismanagement and muddle. Monstrous Mark IX stories of faulty designs and missing gear-wheels and guns that won't traverse. People love 'em. The country thrives on 'em. Parliament would be lost without them. So here we are—and there goes the hooter for knocking-off."

"What, at four o'clock?" I cried.

"That's right," he said, nodding his foolish head. "Go and write to the papers about it."

H. F. E.

## The Sergeant

THERE was a single hair inside my rifle. This showed a certain slackness, I admit. The sergeant, who exaggerates a trifle, said clumps of fern were sprouting out of it.

Because one wisp of fluff had been located Upon the floor, the sergeant shook his head, And bluntly, categorically stated I kept a rag-store underneath my bed.

I made a tiny nick while I was shaving— A cut I did not even have to caulk. The sergeant, as he viewed this faint engraving, Said, "Use a razor, not a knife and fork."

And when I fell, with fifty others by me, In mimic battle, and was labelled "Dead," "You call yourself a blooming corpse, Gorbliney! First time you've looked alive," the sergeant said.



## Little Talks

WELL, I see that Science still gamely struggles on in the wake of Albert Haddock.

What have you got there?

This is a scientific American magazine called the *Journal of Nutrition*—

Now, for heaven's sake don't laugh at scientific American magazines just now!

Nothing of the sort. The magazine is my ally. It has an article headed POLYNEUROPATHY DELAYED BY ALCOHOL.

Polly who?

Polyneuropathy. It means neuritis all over, I gather. And the theory was, to quote the article, that "a deficiency of vitamin B (B<sub>1</sub>) was present in the diets of alcoholic, polyneuritic patients. . . . Since there was no evidence to the contrary the assumption has been retained that the metabolism of alcohol increased the need for thiamine, and on this basis alcohol has been indicted as a more or less specific factor in producing the polyneuropathy seen in alcoholic patients."

So what?

Well, in other words, if you took alcohol you needed more vitamin B<sub>1</sub>, and, failing that, you got polyneuropathy—what-is-it. But some intelligent chaps weren't ready to accept that without evidence to the contrary, so they carried out a series of experiments on rats.

Can rats take alcohol?

Certainly. And like it. What they did was to shut up twelve pairs of rats in twelve cages and feed them all on diet No. 461.

What is diet No. 461?

Leached and alcohol extracted casein 18 per cent.; sucrose 73 per cent.; cottonseed oil 3 per cent.; cod liver oil 2 per cent.; Osborne and Mendel salt mixture, 4 per cent.—and a daily supplement of riboflavin, calcium pantothenate, pyridoxine, nicotinic acid and choline.

Sounds most unappetising.

Also, for the first forty-two days they added 4 µg. of thiamine—that means Vitamin B<sub>1</sub>, I gather—to the daily vitamin supplement. They then cut off dear old B<sub>1</sub> entirely, and recorded the number of days from that day to "the onset of complete neuropathy."

How do you know when neuropathy is complete?

Why, when you're "spastic," and have an ataxic tonic convulsive seizure if you're dropped on your back from a height of three to five inches. That, anyhow, was the test for rats.

Go on. This is thrilling.

It is. Well, in the first experiment ("Effect of whisky with isocaloric intake") they say that one rat in each pair drank whisky *ad libitum*, and the other water *ad libitum*.

What whisky was it?

Oh, "a 100 proof commercial brand, diluted with an equal volume of water."

Doubles.

Yes. And, by the way, "because of the calories supplied by the whisky the average intake of diet No. 461 for the rats receiving whisky was about 79 per cent. of the amount of this diet eaten by the rats getting water." In other words, as we might have guessed, the teetotal rats had to eat much more.

Now, then!

Well, but listen to the result:

"IN EVERY ONE OF THE TWELVE PAIRS OF RATS POLYNEUROPATHY FIRST OCCURRED IN THE RAT THAT DRANK WATER."

Nonsense!

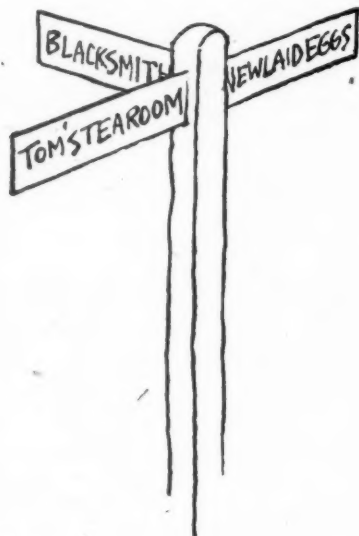
Look for yourself.

It's true. "In every one of the twelve pairs of rats polyneuropathy first occurred in the rat that drank water"—Astonishing!

Not at all. I could have told them that years ago. And here's a lovely diagram. You see?

What's the black?

The black's water—the white's whisky. And the wretched rat that had nearly all water got polyneuro-



pathy first—in twenty days. But the rat that had five parts whisky and one part water survived for fifty-five days!

And then died?

Oh, yes, they all died in the end—because they were getting no vitamin B<sub>1</sub>. It's not suggested that whisky is a substitute for that.

A pity.

Then they had another experiment—

"Effect of whisky with equal food intake." And here "In eleven of the twelve pairs polyneuropathy first occurred in the rat drinking water." (The twelfth pair was discarded because one of the rats (receiving whisky) died of something else.)

Whisky, perhaps.

Don't be absurd. All the experiments had the same result. And, finally, they gave the poor brutes good feeds of Vitamin B<sub>1</sub>, as well as water—or whisky. And this showed that as long as they had Vitamin B<sub>1</sub> it didn't matter whether they drank water or whisky. Look.

"None of the rats on water or whisky that received 15µg. of thiamine chloride daily showed any sign of polyneuropathy." I see.

And here's the grand total. "In paired feeding experiments, with a thiamine-deficient diet, fifty-four rats on water without exception developed polyneuropathy before the paired litter mates on alcohol or whisky."

What is the date of this magazine?

*Journal of Nutrition*, July 10th, 1942. It goes on: "It is clear from the results of the above experiments that under these conditions alcohol and whisky caused a delay in the onset of the polyneuropathy. No definite explanation of the mechanism of this delay is evident."

Ha!

Shut up. "It is obvious that the data do NOT support the assumption that the ingestion of alcohol increases the thiamine requirement."

You know what Nancy Astor will say?

What?

She'll say it may be good enough for rats—

That's no answer. The only question still unanswered is: "Why is this beneficent liquid taxed about 400 per cent., as if it were a dangerous poison?"

No wonder there's so much neuritis about.

A. P. H.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

## At the Pictures

## LARCENY, INC. (WARNER)

IN the best of all his films, when he was a saloon-keeper on the Californian coast at the height of the gold-rush, EDWARD G. ROBINSON was a dynamic villain with a streak of nobility. Of late years he has grown both less villainous and less dynamic. He is on the way to becoming a humorous villain with a streak of kindness, and is as well qualified to succeed in this character as in his earlier one, if he is given the right material to work on. Mere farce does not suit him, and there is too much of it in *Larceny, Inc.* It opens well with an interview between the Warden of Sing Sing and *Pressure Maxwell* (EDWARD G. ROBINSON), who is leaving the prison and wants a presentable suit in which to face the world. Having wheedled one out of the Warden, he walks out, remarking to his companion: "If only I could meet an overcoat my size!" and presently he has the overcoat, too. Having tried and failed to raise a loan from a bank, he acquires a leather shop next door, intending, with the help of his two old associates in crime, *Jug Martin* (BRODERICK CRAWFORD) and *Weepy Davis* (EDWARD BROPHY), to break into the bank through the wall of his cellar. It is at this point that the comedy collapses into farce. The misadventures in the cellar—burst pipes and so on—are not only wearisome in themselves, but they interfere with the genuinely humorous situation produced by the sudden success of the leather shop. *Pressure Maxwell* becomes the most important personage in the street and, carried away by his unexpected and entirely unearned success, he even contemplates a life of honest enterprise, suggesting to his unenthusiastic partners that they should return with him to his home-town, and make it "cowhide-conscious." But this is only a passing gleam. The story becomes more and more extravagant, there is one other good moment when *Pressure Maxwell*, in a speech to an admiring crowd of neighbours, dramatizes himself as a misunderstood lover of his

kind—"I may have seemed aloof, bitter . . ."; and then the nonsense begins again, and presently *Pressure Maxwell*, dressed as Father Christmas, is rescuing the old man to whom the shop originally belonged from its



J.H.DOWD

[Larceny, Inc.]

"I KNOW A BANK . . ."

*Jug Martin* . . . . . BRODERICK CRAWFORD  
*Pressure Maxwell* . . . . . EDWARD G. ROBINSON  
*Weepy Davis* . . . . . EDWARD BROPHY

blazing interior. EDWARD G. ROBINSON may be modest enough to think this kind of thing good enough for him, but his admirers will not be so easily satisfied.



J.H.D.

[Fingers at the Window]

A SPLIT MIND

Dr. Santell . . . . . BASIL RATHBONE

## FINGERS AT THE WINDOW (REGAL)

To produce a sense of horror it is not enough to pack a film with maniacs stalking innocent victims axe in hand.

The author, or authors, must live in their theme, not merely piece it together; the actors, in the intervals dedicated to ove-making, must bear in mind that the axe-wielding maniacs are still at large. *Fingers at the Window* opens with "Chicago in grip of Ax Terror," as the papers put it. *Duffy* (LEW AYRES), a gallant young actor, observing a suspicious figure stealing in the wake of *Edwina Brown* (LARAINE DAY), takes charge of her, after some protests on her part, which are laid aside when the suspicious figure, in the momentary absence of *Duffy*, re-emerges and chases her along a deserted street. Safe in her flat, *Duffy* in attendance, she is her light-hearted self once more. A period of suspense while the maniac crawls in at the window. Overpowered by *Duffy*, he is removed by the police, and the lovers again lay dull care aside until a misunderstanding clouds their happiness, and *Duffy* flings out in dudgeon, only to run into another axe-wielding schizophrenic.

The master-mind behind these deranged desperadoes is a *Doctor Santell* (BASIL RATHBONE). This man had known, and become engaged to, *Edwina Brown* in Paris. He had also known the genuine *Dr. Santell* there, had murdered him and taken his name and money. Back in Chicago, he sets about disposing of the seven people who knew him under his real name. *Edwina Brown* being the seventh and last. *Duffy* gets on his track, is pushed on to an elevator, falls through to the street beneath, makes a quick recovery in hospital, is given a lethal injection by *Santell*, is put right by another injection, rushes to *Santell's* house whither *Edwina Brown* has rashly preceded him, is arrested on arrival by a posse of thick-witted detectives, unmasks *Santell*, and all ends happily, the bogus *Santell* dead on the carpet, and *Edwina* in *Duffy's* arms, assuring him that she feels "fine," but he must marry her at once, for she never wants to spend another night alone as long as she lives.

On the whole, one's sympathies are with the pseudo-*Santell*, or at any rate with BASIL RATHBONE.

H. K.

## Jung Wee Soon on Ethnology

**H**E told me that his name was Jung Wee Soon and he was eight years old and he would like to walk with me. This lack of Oriental reserve is common among the Chinese children in Vancouver and perhaps among all children everywhere, but as it was my first talk with a Chinese since we became allies, I naturally felt more honoured than usual and jumped at the chance to do a little fraternizing. Jung Wee Soon and I walked miles and miles, just to celebrate our alliance, and as we walked we discussed the war.

"I feel sorry for the Japs," he said. "Don't you bother feeling sorry for them, Wee Soon," I said. "They have an awful lot coming to them. They got too cocky."

"You mean stuck on themselves? You bet. But I didn't mean that. If they act bad, we've got to treat them bad. And pretty soon we'll start to treat them awful. Chinese and

Americans and Canadians and English. We'll all jump on them at the same time, and blooey, no more Japs, ha, ha."

"Ha, ha. We'll have Australians and Hollanders and a few others too, all jumping. As you say, blooey; no more Japs. But why do you feel sorry?"

"Well, it isn't really their fault."

"What?"

"No, honest, mister, it isn't a Jap's fault he's so awful. You don't understand. Long ago, hundreds and hundreds of years, we had plenty bad men in China. Ca-rimimals, see? Only worse than ca-rimimals now. So bad we couldn't keep them in China. So we sent these bad men to some islands we had. These islands were called Japan. Well, these awful ca-rimimals had no wives, so they married animals. And their children were the Japs. So it isn't a Jap's fault he is so awful, is it?"

"Perhaps not, Wee Soon. And so,

if you had a gun here and we suddenly came across a lot of bad Japs, you would feel sorry and wonder what to do?"

"No. I would shoot them all, and then feel sorry."

"Sorry you'd shot them?"

"No. Sorry I *had* to shoot them. Like mosquitoes: if you felt sorry *before* you killed a mosquito, that would be no good. I guess I got a right to feel sorry for myself first, eh?"

"Maybe. But aren't you glad when you've killed a bad mosquito?"

"Sure."

"Then how can you be sorry?"

"I'm glad I killed such a bad mosquito but I am sorry he had to be so bad. But maybe there is time to figure that out after we get a wallop at those Japs, eh? After the war, I can feel sorry all I want. You bet."

"You bet," I agreed, and the allies walked happily on.







"... right over the hill till you strike the main road, then turn to your left and straight on for two miles."

## Horses and Carts

**H**ORSES, the papers tell us, are in the news. There have never been so many horses and carts and ponies and traps on the road since there started being so few, and there have never (this is me now, not the papers) been so many people pointing them out. It is just possible too that there have never been so many people knowing so little about the management of the horse and cart; I mean, look at all the people who have never learnt to play bridge. So I am writing this to encourage such people; and the first thing such people must get rid of is a dim feeling which has always hung round their mental necks; the guilty half-realization that man is responsible for the horse's place in the world; or, to put it more plainly, that horses wouldn't be always pulling carts uphill if man hadn't cashed in on them. Paradoxically, those who have never let this get them down, but tell themselves that the horse likes it, are called horse-lovers. This is a curious fact which we can do nothing about, because no one can do anything about horse-lovers.

First a few general facts about the horse. The horse is very interesting because when it walks or trots one pair of its legs goes in a different way from the other pair, wherever you are looking at the horse from. This is not interesting to the horse, or indeed to anyone not drawing a horse for the first time, and I should add that all animals do it, but there is a deep-rooted idea that the horse invented it. Also the horse can sleep standing up. This is very interesting indeed, because no one has ever seen a horse asleep standing up, and because it adds to that guilty half-realization to know that a horse might have to.

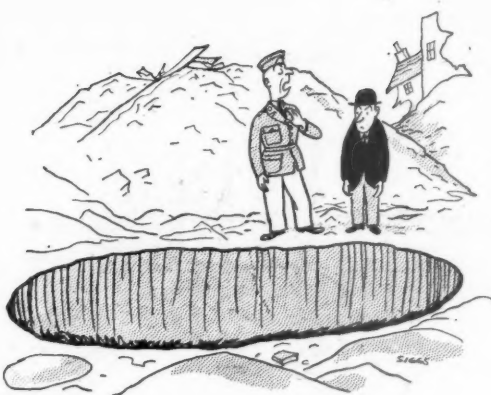
What do horses eat? A horse eats apples, lumps of sugar and bundles of hay from horse-lovers' hands, grass from the ground and something from a nose-bag. Anything else a horse eats only horse-lovers are allowed to know. Only

horse-lovers are supposed to feed horses, but horse-lovers' friends sometimes had to give them lumps of sugar before the war. Horse-lovers' friends remember giving horses lumps of sugar as if it was only yesterday, and horse-lovers' friends would rather die than tell horse-lovers that before they gave a horse a lump of sugar they had thought themselves to the pitch of not minding if the horse did eat their hand as well, or that when it was all over they felt as good as if they had lit a geyser they were not sure of; but then horse-lovers' friends would rather die than tell horse-lovers anything about horses.

Now to get more technical. Horses, as absolutely everyone knows, wear blinkers when they are being driven. This is probably not so unkind as it seems, mainly because nothing is; and people who think themselves into the position of a horse wearing blinkers are no doubt wasting their time as surely as a horse would be wasting its time if it thought itself into the position of, say, people queueing for a bus. As for the rest of a horse's harness, it is not easy to sum this up off-hand, but we can all, I think, see in our minds a collar with armchair stuffing sticking out (showing that subconsciously we knew all along that horse-collars were stuffed like armchairs) and two brass antennae on the collar. For the rest, harness is a mix-up of straps and rings, the idea of which is to join the horse to the cart and the reins to the driver, and it must be allowed that it is all very well worked out.

Now for the cart, or trap. It is fairly safe—as safe as it is to call anything about horses anything—to classify the sort of vehicle a horse pulled before the war as a cart, and the sort that is due to the war a trap. A cart, or the only sort of cart a layman will ever be asked to drive even in war-time, is covered with dried mud and filled with turnips, and pulled by a horse which knows the way anyhow. This sort of cart is very picturesque, that is, good for a photograph in the papers. A trap is fairly picturesque too, but there are a few points you should know. The door at the back has a handle which sometimes opens more easily from inside, by leaning on it, than from the outside by turning it. Furthermore, a trap goes on for a very long time; that is, whatever state of mind you start your journey in, you will go through all the other states of mind before you get there. As for the actual driving of a horse-and-trap, this is the opposite of riding a horse; I mean, it is so easy as to be difficult when you really know how to.

A few miscellaneous facts to end with. Horses are shod, as it is called, with horseshoes, which are made in smithies, which have died out in this country, so that you rarely find more than one to a village. Horses which pull milkmen's carts are more impatient than any other horses; you never see a milkman's horse which is not a house ahead of the milkman. Psychologists say that only in this way can a milkman's horse persuade itself that it is taking exercise. Bakers' horses are patient but worried, as if waiting for the next jerk on the back of the cart from the baker's basket. Horses pulling railway delivery-vans, coal-carts and brewers' drays along the Strand are doing it now because there is a war on, and not, as they used to, to make people late for things. Very small ponies pulling a very small cart with a lot of very heavy people are probably quite happy, really. Horses pulling a plough, or anything which takes two of them in single file, are even more patient than bakers' horses, because they plod. Psychologists say this is due either to the fact that each horse is thinking that the other is doing all the work, and at the same time none of it, or to the earth on their feet; and that psychologists should worry this much about horses is very significant, showing that horses are hanging round their mental necks too.



"Gee, this is nothing—you ought to have seen the way we imagined it over in the States."

## Industrial Relations

XIII

THIS article is addressed to women—in particular to those women who, with the Pennine Chain, form the backbone of the country. I refer of course to the married women who master our ménages and minister to our progeny. The truth is (it is always better to speak the truth to women—it saves wear and tear on the inside pockets) that women are urgently needed for part-time work at the Snacker and Dipocket Small Things Co. (1928), Ltd. As Scientific Management Consultant and Industrial Relations and Welfare Officer of the firm I am brought face to face with most of the problems of labour recruitment. I feel, therefore, that it is my duty to publish representative items from my case-book. Nothing is valueless that helps to remove the obstacles that are hindering the enrolment of married women in our war factories.

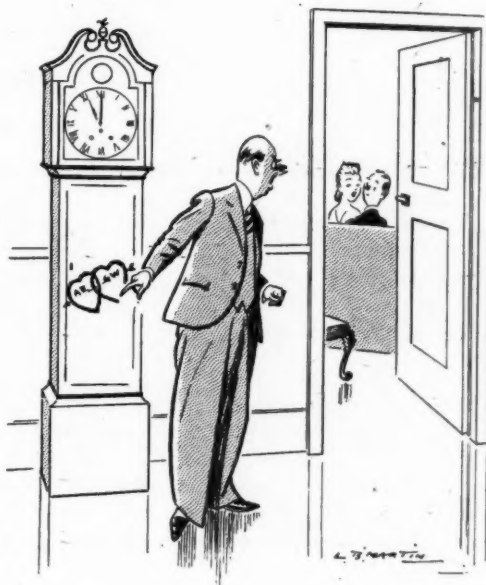
"Will you please inform me whether the time I can spare for war-work would be any use to you?" writes Mrs. Heathcote Porringer. "On Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays I am free between 8.30 A.M. (when I finish my milk rounds) and 9.05 A.M. (when I join the fish-queue). I am also free from 2.30 P.M. (Mondays excepted—wash-day) to 3.15, when I attend the Reconstruction Committee meetings of the Moddersley Ladies' 'Inner Circle.' I need not go to the meetings on Tuesday and Friday, but if I miss one I ought to go to the other, if you see what I mean. I am afraid that I am quite unable to work at the week-ends, being tied up with jam-preserving for evacuees and Christmas parcels for local members of the W.A.A.F. You will see that my time for armaments production is strictly limited, but I realize that even one more tank per week would be something and I am ready and waiting. I should be pleased to receive a prospectus containing details of rates of pay."

"Anxious as I am to serve," writes Mrs. Agnes Dephmut, "I feel that you ought to know the conditions upon which I would accept office. From what I hear, these crèches of yours are pretty good, but are they equipped with collapsible grandfather's clocks? If not, I am afraid that they would be no use to my three-years-old son, Jimmy. He takes after his father for that. If he isn't taking our clock to

pieces he's yelling blue murder. You can tell how bad it is, we had to take it (the clock) with us on our holidays last year. This year, of course, was another thing. Again, little Gwendie, aged two, is very susceptible to wasp stings, so that I could not let her come to your crèche if there are any fruit trees handy. Apart from this I am quite willing to serve every morning between nine and eleven providing that I am not bossed about too much and providing I receive a priority badge for vegetable queues. Perhaps you will let me know by return."

Mrs. Harry Racket writes: "I should like so much to work in your nice factory but I am a little worried about the problem of costume. Do I have to wear the uniform overalls and dust-cap? Coupons being what they are, I feel that the expense to me and to the country if I had to obtain a new rig-out would be quite out of proportion to my armaments contribution. Now I have a very neat little two-piece beach *négligé* with *appliqué* work on the back and flounces which I should imagine would be just it. It is self-coloured in orange, the *appliqué* being a Florence Mills shade. Perhaps you would let me know whether this would be in order. P.S.—In regard to the dust-cap it has just occurred to me that my husband's 'Old Cowliensian' cricket-cap would be the very thing."

Let me answer my correspondents. Yes, Mrs. Porringer, you are wanted. Come to the factory by all means, if only to draw your pay. And bring your Reconstruction Committee with you. And you, Mrs. Dephmut, need have no fears about our crèches. If a grandfather's clock is really necessary it will be indented for immediately. Remember that there is still such a thing as priority, Mrs. Dephmut, and that plenty of lease-lend grandfather's clocks are coming into the country. To you, Mrs. Racket, I can only answer in the negative. The word "flounces" would never get past a Government inspector. Although your life is your own we cannot have valuable machines lying idle while odd torsoes and scalps are being removed. The cricket-cap, though, is an admirable suggestion. By the way, Simkin and Burgoyne, in the Strand, have a particularly attractive "Go to it" suit in beige and amber and dirt cheap at only five coupons.





*"Well, anyway, they must be able to carry a terrible lot of petrol in those things."*

## Bran Mash

France 1915

**A** WASTED scent from a source unknown to-day awoke  
in a flash  
A memory dormant many a year—of Saturday/  
night's bran mash,  
For that was the night when, out at rest, with an easy,  
day ahead,  
We gave the horses a hot bran mash and loved to see them  
fed.

Under cover and bedded down and groomed in the only way  
Good enough for the pick of their kind that we had in the  
R.H.A.,  
The hairies relished the steaming stuff with its wholesome,  
fragrant scent,  
And even the stable-picket shared in the hour's secure  
content.

From barn to barn where the beauties fed, glossy and  
sleek and fit—  
Free awhile from the tugging trace, free of the mastering  
bit—  
I'd stroll, a man in a happy mood again for a moment mine,  
As I dream of the Troop on a Saturday night, at rest  
behind the Line.

Here and there from a brimming pail I would take a  
pinch to chew,  
So pleased with the warm and balmy scent I must love the  
flavour too,  
And even the name, in a horseman's heart, revives like a  
blessed spell,  
With all that ever it meant to him, the delectable stable-  
smell!

W. K. H.





HOW—WHEN—AND—WHERE?

## Impressions of Parliament

### Business Done

**Tuesday September 8th.**—House of Lords: "Twas a Famous Victory," Starring Lord Marchwood.

House of Commons: A Statement on the War—But Only Just.

**Wednesday, September 9th.**—House of Commons: £ s. d.—of the Spending Thereof There is No End.

**Tuesday, September 8th.**—Mr. HUGH DALTON, President of the Board of Trade, looking (to coin a phrase) bronzed and fit, was announcing to the House of Commons to-day that he had forbidden his Black Market detectives to act as *agents provocateurs*, when there was a roar of cheers. Mr. DALTON assumed the mildly astonished expression of the comedian who says: "I know it's good, but it's not *that* good!" Then he glanced behind him and found the reason for all the pother.

The reason sat there nodding thanks for the reception, in the genially aloof manner only Mr. WINSTON LEONARD SPENCER CHURCHILL, His Majesty's Prime Adviser, can employ with grace.

Thus did the PRIME MINISTER return to the bosom of the Mother of Parliaments after his many and various journeyings abroad—to Cairo, and Moscow, and Teheran and half a hundred places besides.

The House has the avidity of a small boy for adventure stories, and it likes them with plenty of incident and plot. It likes them well told, with thrilling, vivid details, and not-too much mystery.

So Members crowded into the Chamber, squeezed into the inadequate benches, perched on steps and ledges and generally prepared for martyrdom in a good cause. Ambassadors craned their necks to lose no word. Peers huddled in their gallery. Ladies (with handsome white-haired Mrs. CHURCHILL prominent among them) crowded their several galleries. Alert Pressmen occupied their places in the Press Gallery. All was expectation and suppressed excitement.

Mr. CHURCHILL, pulling documents,

and notes, and papers, and pieces of string, and pairs of spectacles, and pencils from his many and seemingly bottomless pockets, kept them all waiting like the supreme artist he is.

The excited buzz died away for a few minutes while the House paid sincere tribute to the memory of "that gallant and handsome Prince," the Duke of KENT, killed recently in an air-crash in Scotland, while on Active Service. Mr. CHURCHILL himself proposed the motions of condolence in terms that moved the House, and he was supported with equal eloquence by Mr. ARTHUR GREENWOOD, for the

"even—or almost even—terms," while remaining the servant of the House. This seemed to amuse the Labour Members, who roared with laughter. The Conservatives were not amused. Mr. CHURCHILL looked slightly surprised by the mirth.

About Egypt, he said that we now had a strong and resolute Army facing the enemy, and confident of being able to defend the country for months ahead. And they were entitled to regard the fighting so far as—"distinctly not unsatisfactory."

About the talks with STALIN—*nothing*, except that the Russian leader did not think either we or the United States had done enough to relieve the military pressure on the Soviet.

Members gasped a bit when, after a thumb-nail sketch of Premier STALIN, they realized that this was to be the end of the story.

Scores of them got up and walked out, talking among themselves. Mr. CHURCHILL looked surprised. He tried another purple passage. Some more Members went out. So he came to his peroration about the coming Hour of Liberation being also the Hour of Retribution for wrongdoers. And almost the entire House walked out, pursued by baleful glances from Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS.

Poor Mr. GREENWOOD, who followed, found himself in an almost empty House. Which was a pity, because his was a thoughtful, well-delivered speech. Mr. CHURCHILL walked out half-way through it.

Mr. ROBERT CARY was the next speaker, and while he was talking interestingly someone pointed out that the House was without a quorum of forty. A "count" produced the required minimum for the required half-minute, but the Chamber presented its Westminster Desert appearance again immediately afterwards.

One more speaker, and the great debate, heralded for weeks, and designed to go on for two days, feebly fizzled out. Just went out, like a defective firework or a war-time match.

Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS, Leader of the House, glared angrily around, made some clearly scathing comments to nearby Government Whips, and then, rising, spoke his comments aloud. They were a rebuke to those who had walked out on the PRIME MINISTER.



"GREAT EXPECTATIONS"

Pip Churchill. "It has been a memorable time for me, Joe."  
J. Gargery Stalin. "Likewise for myself, Pip!"

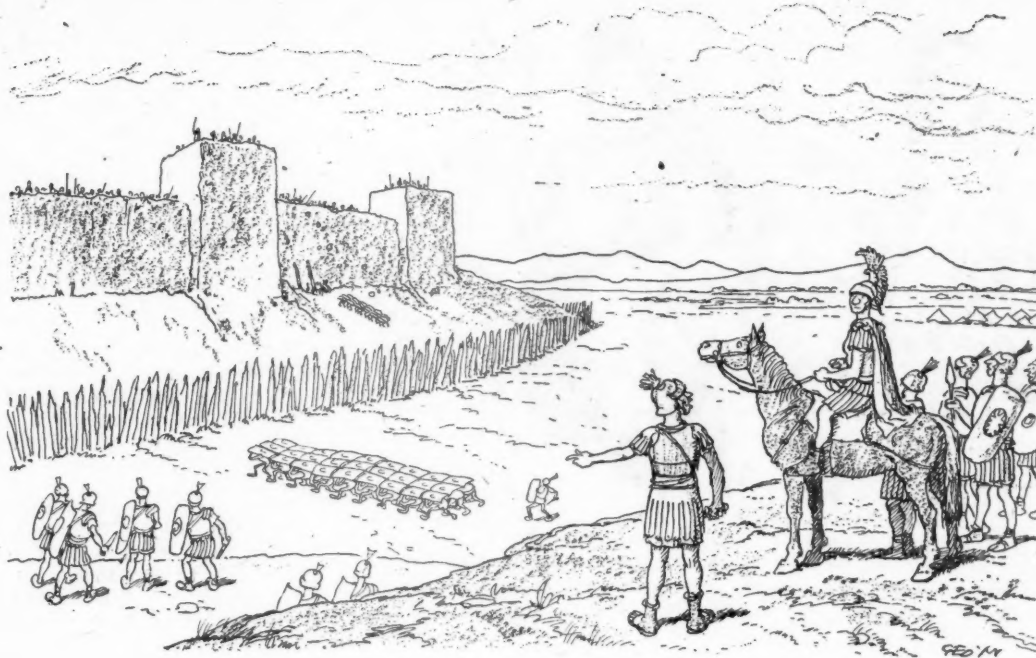
Labour Opposition, and by Sir PERCY HARRIS, for the Liberals.

Silently, the House bade a last farewell to a well-loved young Prince who had so often sat in the Peers' Gallery, listening to great debates.

Then to the long-awaited adventure story.

Mr. CHURCHILL, patently enjoying every moment of it, stepped to the Table and produced his notes. There was a rather breathless cheer. Then eager silence.

Subtly recalling that the last time he had addressed the House—nine weeks ago—he had won a great majority for his Government, Mr. CHURCHILL glided into a purple passage about the adaptability of our democratic system to the need for his meeting men like STALIN and ROOSEVELT on



*"So far we've kept it a secret, but sooner or later it's bound to leak out."*

"Apparently," he snapped, "the Prime Minister's speech leaves nothing for discussion!"

The cheer this remark drew was, to say the least, equivocal. The House went home; Sir STAFFORD returned to his anger and vehement (if unheard) comments to the Government Whips.

Such an anti-climax gave added zest to a brisk little debate Lord MARCHWOOD (tireless watcher of the interests of the Merchant Navy, whose Master he is) raised in the House of Lords. His demand was a simple and clear one: he wanted for the heroes of the *Merchant Navy* the same honours and decorations as are given to the heroes of the *Royal Navy*.

For were not the hazards shared? Was there distinction between valour (R.N.) and valour (M.N.)? Surely not! Yet valour (R.N.) might bring the glittering prize of a D.S.O. and valour (M.N.) an O.B.E., Civil Division. Why, asked Lord MARCHWOOD, why, why, why?

Give them all the same recognition for the same valour, he demanded, and the House cheered as it seldom cheers.

Lord MARCHWOOD's unfailing ally, Admiral of the Fleet, Lord CORK AND ORRERY, joined in the fray—offering a

rather delightful Hibernian picture of himself as being at once "on the shelf" and "on firm ground." Lord CHATFIELD (also A. of F.), Law-Lord MAUGHAM, Lord BRABAZON of TARA, Lord WINSTER and Lord JESSEL followed on the same side, as the Law Reports say.

Lord LEATHERS, the War Transport Minister, who had all along worn a curiously confident expression, got up and—gave in. Merchant officers are to have the D.S.O., petty officers and men the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal and the Distinguished Service Medal, he announced.

Lord MARCHWOOD (so surprised and pleased that he addressed their Lordships as "Gentlemen") thanked the Minister, his friends, his foes, the Royal and Merchant Navies, and anyone else in range. The Merchant Navy will doubtless thank him for a Distinguished Service.

*Wednesday, September 9th.*—Governess CRIPPS, to the joy of the Houseful of "naughty boys," heard one of them say, distinctly and defiantly: "RATS!"

Mr. SHINWELL (who had apparently been one of the absentees of yesterday) inquired, as soon as Questions ended,

"by what right Sir STAFFORD had rebuked absent Members."

This quietly-spoken query produced a yell of cheers of surpassing ferocity and length from almost the entire House, and a rosy, rosy blush from the questionee. The cheer went on for a full minute, and was succeeded by a frigid hush.

Amid this hush, Sir STAFFORD rose and crisply said he would not cancel half a line of it. The piety and wit of the crowd of angry Members who thereupon joined in the fray had no effect, either, and the House went on to talk about the renewal of the recess.

Captain CUNNINGHAM-REID had been speaking for but a minute when it was noted that Sir STAFFORD had joined the ranks of the absentees. There was another rumpus, but the Lost Leader did not return for some time.

The Government's adjournment plans were approved, and then the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir KINGSLEY WOOD, spoke a piece about the cost of the war. This (as the Government modestly puts it) is considerable; and it looks like being so for some time to come. But the House begrudges not a single million if it contributes to victory.





*"You take this chopped meat and make a small cake out of it and fry it on both sides for about five minutes—it's really quite easy."*

## Me and a Monkey

By Smith Minor

WE all know we are supposed to help each other, espeshully in a war, and one dose, but shuold one always do it, or are there times when one neadn't? I say one always shuold, but Green says not, he once asking me when we were argueing about this rather "vhexed question," as it's called,

"What if somebody not pretty fell off a peer and you cuoldn't swim?"

"I don't say I'd jump after him or her," I said, "but I think I ouht to."

"Then there'd be two poeple to save insted of one," he said, "and the next person who jumped mightn't be able to save both."

"I see what you mean," I said, "but suppose there wasn't a next person on the peer?"

"Well, then two poeple wuold be drowned insted of one," he said.

"I grant you that," I said, "but if the one who went in second, i.e., me, becorse there wasn't anyone else, i.e., nobody, hadn't jumped in but had jest looked over and watched, wuoldn't he be haunted for ever afterwords?"

"I'd sooner be alive and haunted than dead and not," he said.

"I see what you mean," I said.

Only I still thort he was wrong.

I don't want to raze your hopes by

making you think that what I am going to tell you about is saving a person, it's about saving a monkey (thouh don't forget a monkey may become a person later on if it is true we have come from them), but it was after I had saved the monkey, well, in a way, that Green and I wondered if I had neaded to, and then got argueing about it in the rather larger way you have jest read.

Well, anyhow, this is what hapened.

Not fealing very well throuh (1) having been ill, you still stay wobberley for a bit, (2) having eaten a rather cuerious cake, (3) having lost nine-pence, and (4) having seen a very poor man that morning looking white and hungary, I never cuold stand that somehow, and full of holes, and not being able to give him anything becorse of "3," I desided to take a walk, thinking that

"A wif or two of country air

Might make a gloomy world more fair,"

thouh if it did or if it didn't I will leave the gentel reader to judge.

Presently I reechad a cottage with some tall trees in the front garden, and a woman came rushing out in what seamed to me like the direst plite.

"Oh, dear, oh, dear," she cried.

"Is anything the matter?" I said.

"I've lost my monkey," she said.

"It may come back," I said. "Dogs do. Also crabs."

"What?" she said.

"Crabs," I said. "I don't keep one, but I know a boy who dose."

"Dose what?" she said.

I think she was a little deaf.

"Keep a crab," I said, "and one morning it got away, but it came back in the afternoon."

"Well, I'm talking about a monkey," she said, "and it's not got to come back, it's got to come down."

"Oh," I said.

"Yes," she said, "it's up that tree, and I'd clime after it if I wasn't so old."

"You don't look at all old," I said.

She did, but one says that.

"Well, I'm too old to clime up trees, anyhow," she said, "so wuold you clime up for me?"

Now this is where Green thort I ouht to have said no, becorse (1) whose monkey was it, hers or mine? (2) poeple ouht to learn to look after their own animals, wuold I of asked her to feed my goldfish? (3) monkeys are best lost, don't forget I'm telling you what he thort, not what I thort, and (4) the tree was a very tall one without any branches for a long way up.

"Yes, but even if you're right, what cuold I of said to her?" I said, this of corse being to Green, becorse this bit is in what is called parryenthis. I hope the reader won't think I'm putting on side when I sometimes use longer words than he or she wuold expeckt, but when you have jest learned them, well, I suppose you are meant to use them.

"You cuold of said you had a trane to catch," he said.

"That wuold of been a lie," I said.

"Yes, a jolly good one," he said, "but if you'd wanted it to be the truth you cuold of gone and caught one."

"Where to?" I said.

End of parryenthis.

Anyway I didn't say no, I said I'd see what I cuold do, wich at first looked like nothing. I'm not a good climer, having something the matter with me that makes me feal upside down on hights, but even a Swiss cuoldn't clime a tree if the first branche was as high as a cealing. So then I said, "Have you got a ladder?" hoping she hadn't, but she said, "Yes, an old one," and we got it.

She was right about it being old, in fact this was the last time it was ever used. When we had put it against the tree I saw that most of the wrungs were missing, and when I began to clime it I

\* I sware this is true. Author.

found that all the ones that weren't missing were so loose that they became missing the momint you stepped on them, if you know what I mean. That ment that I had to keap on going up quick, or I'd have gone down quicker, wich the ladder did jest as I'd got hold of the branche. You see, by that time there weren't any wrungs left to hold it together.

Well, this time I didn't jest feal as if I was upside down, I was upside down,\* and the thort came to me, like thorts do at such times, "If I let go I will never write any more for *Punch*, will anyone mind?" But as you will see by my writing this, and also your reading it, I didn't let go, but manidged, *je ne sait pas comment*, to swing on to another branche wich got me the right side up.\* Of corse, if I wasn't upside down before, then I was now, all I cuold say for certin was that it was diferent. Then I heard the woman calling, she saying,

"Where have you got to?"

"I don't know," I said.

"Do you know you've broke my ladder?" she said.

"If you work it out," I said, "you must know I know that."

"Well, where's that monkey?" she said.

"What is its name?" I said.

"Its name won't help you to see it," she said.

"It may, if I call it," I said.

"Oh. Bimble," she said.

"Why?" I said.

"What do you mean why?" she said. "Do you know why you're called whatever you're called?"

"That's true," I said.

"You'll have to go ever so much higher up than you are," she said.

"Thank you," I said.

So then I began climing higher up, calling "Bimble" as I went, and hoping that wuold make the monkey begin climing down.

Now I will not harow the reader with all my feelings, becorse (1) I cuoldn't discribe some of them, and (2) he or she wuold not think much of me if I cuold, but you've got to remember that I wasn't fealing well before I started (*vide back*), and also that some poeple may be brave in one way thuoh not in another. Once I stoped a horse. Anyhow, whatever I felt, I didn't turn back, not that I cuold of, and at last, after what seamed a thousand years of dizziness, and my forrid getting a fealing like an empty bag that anybody cuold burst,

"I found that I was forced to stop, Scince, lo! I'd got unto the top,"

and there, lo! again, was Bimble, swinging on a branche by his tail.

He stoped swinging when he saw me, and looked surprised.

"Hallo, what have you come up for?" he seamed to say.

"For you," I said.

I have a way of talking to animals, knowing what they wuold say, if they cuold, by their expreshuns. You can do it with most animals, except ants.

Going on, the monkey seamed to go on, "But I'm quite happy here."

"I wish I was," I said.

"You look orful," he seamed to say.

"I feal like I look," I said.

"Then why don't you go down again?" he seamed to say.

"I wuold if I cuold," I said, "but how? The ladder's broken."

"What a fuss," he seamed to say, "folow me, and I'll show you."

And he did. He went along another branche that led to another branche of another tree, looking back to see if I was folowing him, wich I was, and this other tree was as diferent to the other tree as a Fighting Frenchman to a Jap, having branches all the way down.

Well, when we reeched the bottom the woman thanked me, and I said, "Not at all," as one dose, and then we parted, I cuoldn't help hoping, for ever.

Of corse, aktuallly I hadn't brout the monkey down, it had brout me down. In fact, as soon as I was at the gate it went up again.

But I didn't let on that I'd seen.

## Desert Fighter

THE great and unforgiving glare  
Of desert skies and desert  
sands,  
The tropic sun's all-powerful stare  
That strikes the strongest where he  
stands,  
The searing touch of red-hot steel  
To fingers desperate with strain,  
The cursed dust which clogs the  
wheel,  
The eyes, ears, throat, the very  
brain—  
Amid this panoply of Hell,  
Tormented by the burning haze,  
Remember, O remember well  
(For reason's sake) your English  
days!

A deep brown pool  
In the shaded river,  
The rustling cool  
Of reeds a-shiver,  
The noonday smoke  
On a green moss-pillow  
Under the cloak  
Of the weeping willow;  
The rippling splash  
Of trout that rise  
To the rainbow flash  
Of the dancing flies;  
And the homeward walk  
When a nightingale sings  
Through the dusk and our talk  
Of familiar things.



"I'm afraid you'll find it rather an old-fashioned place."

\* I think. Author.

## At the Play

### "MEN IN SHADOW" (VAUDEVILLE)

ALARM and despondency are the last emotions which will be induced by a visit to the latest of the war-plays, Miss MARY HAYLEY BELL's *Men in Shadow*. This is a cheery little saga—why not abuse the abused word properly?—of a brave little band of Englishmen hiding in a hay-loft in Normandy, and being helped by the French peasantry in various acts of sabotage and anti-persecution.

It has nearly all the virtues of a good war-play. It is current and timely. It has an ending so happy that we are sent home convinced of the universal friendliness of the French and the omnipresent stupidity of the Germans. Its dialogue is natural and easy. Its events are dramatic and well-ordered. It has been exceptionally well-produced by Mr. JOHN MILLS and Mr. BERNARD MILES. The setting has been unusually well-designed by Mr. FRANK BAUER. (This is an artist whose formative influences would seem principally to be BRANGWYN and REMBRANDT, and his idea of a loft will bring on attacks of claustrophobia and hay-fever in those playgoers who are susceptible to either or both of those maladies.) The acting includes some of the best to be seen in London. Mr. MILLS himself, as the natural leader of the band, is as alert as a bantam-cock, and as spirited as a sparrow. He is an actor to delight the watchful connoisseur of acting. His hands are as expressive as his features. He can be as sweetly pathetic as a terrier's nose, or as violent as an exacerbated Cockney—and this play makes occasion to ask him to be both.

It is a play, in short, which has everything to commend it, except the not unimportant fact that it is not a play at all. It is an anecdote, a situation. It is a middle without either a beginning or an end. It achieves a tension which never quite amounts to suspense. It has passion without power, verisimilitude without cogency. It is even a little perverse in the quality of its effectiveness. It makes us rather annoyed with its Germans who have not the plain sense to climb through gaping trap-doors to see what may be what. It makes us ask why we are taking so long a time to defeat an enemy so mindless and so unobservant, and wonder whether the Second Front is not merely a matter for Messrs. THOMAS COOK to arrange. The search-party in this play's Middle Act goes out of its way not to sit upon a

wounded Englishman who has had a rug thrown over him to make him look like a sofa unattractive enough not to be sat upon. Good production and good acting make us consent to believe almost everything in the play excepting this. A. D.

## At the Ballet

### "TWELFTH NIGHT" (HIS MAJESTY'S)

THE success of ROBERT HELPMANN'S *Hamlet* seems to have set a fashion for Shakespearean ballet. Once upon a time romantic subjects were in vogue; later the fashion was for dramatic and satirical ballets, and later still for ballets with famous symphonies as

### CROMWELL SAID:

"WELL, your danger is as you have seen. And truly I am sorry it is so great. But I wish it to cause no despondency, as truly I think it will not; for we are Englishmen."

The danger is as great as when Cromwell spoke. But what of the men, the living wall that shields us? Night and day, on gale-swept shores, high above the clouds and on the seven seas, with danger ever present, they watch. It is little enough that we can do to ease the hardships borne for us with such gay courage. Little enough—but have we done that little? Have YOU done all you can? A contribution to-day to PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4, means cheer for these gallant men.

a background. If there were pitfalls for the choreographer who harnessed a BRAHMS symphony to a ballet, there are just as many in the way of translating a SHAKESPEARE play into one, though of the opposite kind; for the one has no "programme" and the other too much. It seems that the best way for the choreographer to deal with a symphony is to leave it severely alone, but Mr. HELPMANN has shown with what success a SHAKESPEARE play can be used as the subject for a ballet and his living characters represented in a conventionalized form, provided that SHAKESPEARE himself

is kept out of it; but once he finds his way in, the dancers cease to be characters and shrivel into choreographers' puppets.

The International Ballet Company, in their new and lavishly-produced version of *Twelfth Night*, by attempting to translate Shakespeare directly into the language of the dance have not achieved anything like the same degree of artistic success as Mr. HELPMANN. It is not merely that the plot of *Twelfth Night* is too complicated, for the story of most ballets is incomprehensible unless one keeps one's nose glued to the programme; nor is it that GRIEG's music is void of the atmosphere evoked by the witchery of "... O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound that breathes upon a bank of violets, Stealing and giving odour!"; the cause of the trouble is Mr. LESLIE FRENCH. This great Shakespearean artist, who plays the *Clown* and whose début in ballet this is, at once makes and mars the whole production. His interpretation of his rôle is a superb piece of mime; but when, at the end of the First Act, he sings that most exquisite of all lyrics, "O Mistress Mine," the spirit of SHAKESPEARE takes triumphant possession of the stage and all the rest of the lively and ingenious spectacle fades by contrast into something resembling the boisterous emptiness of a cabaret. Try as one may, one cannot forget SHAKESPEARE, which places the dancers at an unfair disadvantage—as LA FONTAINE puts it, one can slam the door in his face but he comes back again through the window; and this is felt especially when Mr. FRENCH sings "Come away, come away, Death," and "When that I was and a little tiny boy."

None the less, this is a colourful and effective spectacle, with beautiful costumes by DORIS ZINKEISEN; and there is some excellent fun in the scene in which *Maria* (vivaciously danced by NINA TARAKANOVA), *Sir Toby Belch* (JOHN PYGRAM), *Sir Andrew Aguecheek* (made perhaps a shade too cretinous by REX REID) and the *Clown* revenge themselves on the pompous kill-joy *Malvolio* (PETER GARST) by dropping the forged letter in his path. MONA INGLESBY, the producer of the ballet, is *Viola* and RAYMOND FARRELL the *Duke*.

"At the evening service a duet was sung by Mrs. — and Miss — entitled 'Summer Land.' The congregation have now moved into the hall for the winter season."

Provincial Paper.

Taking no chances.



## Parting Shot

OF all the joys to which I look forward on the outbreak of peace, none intrigues me more than the discovery that on the termination of my employment I must return my pistol to my Commanding Officer.

Considering it was not he who gave it to me, this seems peculiar; but the more I dwell upon the possibilities of doing so, the more entertaining they appear.

I have heard of handing in your dinner-pail when life's work is done, but I had no idea that any actual ceremony attended the acceptance of your bowler-hat—on the lines, that is to say, of the return of your sword after a successful court-martial. Nor do I know by which end you offer the pistol. When I received mine it was in a cardboard-box, which I have since lost.

I suppose you knock at the C.O.'s door, and he answers "Huh?" You present your mug and he looks at you over his moustache, under the peak of his hat.

"You wish to see me, Carruthers?"

"Yes, indeed. I have packed everything, and it only remains now to say good-bye, sir, and to hand you this small souvenir of my service under your command."

"My dear fellow, this is extremely good of you, but you should really not have bothered. I am afraid I have bought nothing for you. Actually I did go down, but the shops were shut." By this time he would have undone the outer wrapping and would be getting excited as he fumbled with the inner. "What is it? A box of chocolates? No. . . . I do believe you have remembered what I once said and have got me a hookah." A few seconds later he would be turning over the contents and saying: "Is this something you squirt at roses, or what?"

"I say, look out, sir! It might go off!"

"For heaven's sake, then, take care where you point it! Don't wave it round the room like that."

The C.O. would be under the table by this time.

"But, sir, I simply wanted you to add it to your war trophies. Except for 24th July, 1940, when I fired it on the short range, it is as good as new."

If you knew our Old Man you would understand how he would bellow at me.

"Who do you think I am, you fool, the Quartermaster? Next you will present your anklets, web, to the Adjutant!"



*"Now tell me the whole story from the beginning in your own words. You know—start off with the usual 'Well, Sir, it was like this 'ere . . . ' and then sail right into it."*

To which I should reply as I edged towards the door, "I am only obeying A.C.I. one-six-nine-oblique-three-five, which says *you've* got to have it."

But this is not the only jollity connected with our passing to half-pay (which is what we shall all be on by that time). I find to my delight that a surplus Army officer may, if he wishes, buy a surplus Army horse at a public auction!

Myself, I do not see what is to stop the surplus officer, except a lack of surplus cash. And as a means of getting about while looking for work it seems a jolly good idea, providing you have somewhere to put the horse—other than between two slices of bread.

Anyway, if the auction is public an ex-officer surely does not need a chit to add himself to the suckers who watch the animal being trotted up and down. Why should he not bid like anybody else, providing he can be heard above the heavy breathing of the horse?

These discoveries have whetted my appetite, and I am glad to say I find the index to King's Regulations devoting a page and a half to sub-titles on this very subject. In fact:

"DISCHARGES" . . .  
range from "Free"  
to "With ignominy."

I like best these sub-sections:

"Plain clothes, where obtained . . ."  
which I should have thought was a question of where you left them; and  
"Discharges, places of, avoiding overcrowding at . . ."

Yes, I fear there is bound to be some jostling at the turnstile marked "OUT"; but there can only be one answer to the question "Is your journey really necessary?"

If my Commanding Officer is still running after me with that pistol in his hand, trying to adjust his aim to a parting shot (for which purpose alone I seem to have passed him the gun) my journey definitely WILL be.



"BANANA FRITTERS, dear—are you sure you're not using a pre-war cookery book?"

### Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### James the Second

Now that capitalists have replaced kings and priests as the source of all our woes, English history is being rewritten from a standpoint which would have much amazed MACAULAY. WILLIAM III, according to MACAULAY, was a good and great man who came over to England to help the Whigs in their struggle to establish democratic government in the teeth of Stuart absolutism. According to the historical school founded by HILAIRE BELLOC and G. K. CHESTERTON, the Stuart kings lived only for the common welfare, and WILLIAM III was a cold-hearted mean-spirited opportunist whom the Whig capitalists, heirs of the plunderers of the Catholic Church in the previous century, used as a tool in their conspiracy against the English people. Miss JANE LANE belongs whole-heartedly to the Belloc-Chesterton school, and with the self-abnegating devotion of her sex has undertaken the extremely thankless task of rehabilitating JAMES II (*King James the Last*. ANDREW DAKERS, 12/6). The other STUARTS, however ineffective or unscrupulous, all have some quality which stirs either interest or sympathy. But, in spite of every effort, Miss LANE leaves JAMES II as dull as she found him. She quotes TURENNE's tribute to him as a soldier—"If any man was entirely devoid of fear, it was the Duke of York." She narrates his considerable achievements as a naval commander. She gives several instances of his frankness and candour, as she calls what to others may appear his extreme obtuseness. She details all the treacheries of which he was the victim, and she shows him at the close of his life visiting the monastery of La Trappe each year, and there flagellating himself in reparation of his sins. It ought to be a moving story, but the peculiarly awkward and ill-adjusted character of JAMES II, which nullified every effort on his behalf while he was alive, has also nullified this passionate attempt to afford him posthumous succour. All the blame for Miss LANE's failure, however, must not be laid on her subject. She would have served JAMES better if she had been more temperate in her defence of him and in her denunciation of his enemies.

To help JAMES, she does not blench at the wildest of non-sequiturs—"He was a Catholic, and therefore he had no desire to meddle with the affairs of another creed." Where WILLIAM is concerned, she will admit no light of any kind into her picture. No doubt he had "a queer perverted nature," and his amours may have "sickened even the seventeenth century," though this seems unlikely. But he showed political genius of the first order, and Miss LANE should have admitted this freely, if only to stimulate confidence in her pleas on behalf of JAMES. H. K.

#### Scenes from Clerical Life—New Style

The shipwreck of so many homes, the enforced parting of so many husbands and wives, have invested the Ibsen housewife straining at the domestic leash with even more than her original absurdity. True, a Middle-west *Madame Bovary*, wedded to the local minister, has legitimate grounds for grievance; her position is semi-official, and it is difficult to be a public character and a home-maker. But *Francesca Brown* would hardly have lent herself to home-making at the best of times. She yearns for a job in a New York theatre, or, failing that, a dinner for which one "dresses"; and even Miss ELEANOR GREEN's delicate and precise narrative fails to render these aspirations sympathetic. One is not really sure that she wants to. For *Ariadne Spinning* (CAPE, 7/6) strikes one as a *tour de force* in which four human souls—*Francesca*, her husband *Matthew*, her lover *Henry Chandler*, the lumber king, and *Matthew's* chorister sweetheart *Ellen Maier*—are arranged and painted for their contours, colour and texture like so much still life. Their story deals with tentative breaches of an implied moral code; but the code itself seems to have got mislaid, unless it lurks in secret repository with *Matthew's* invisible (but, one gathers, extremely tiresome) congregation. H. P. E.

#### The Decline of Barssetshire

Mrs. THIRKELL's claim to genius was that she made so much out of so little—silk purses out of swine-fever and high comedy out of an evacuees' tea-party. It is more than distressing to find that in her latest novel, *Marling Hall* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 8/6), she has made out of dull events something even duller. And, let us say it frankly, the atmosphere of snobbishness is quite withering. It is no good pretending that *Lettice Watson*, the heroine, with "a quiet distinction of manner, good enough looks for any man, and the right kind of birth and background," convinces anyone of her attraction. (Her happiest moments are spent at "working-parties at handsome houses where she usually found some ramification of relationship which made a link.") *David Leslie*, the breaker of hearts in *Wild Strawberries*, reappears, and though still meant to be charming is now an insufferable bore. Worse still, and still more sympathetically treated, is *Miss Bunting*, the snobbish-sentimental old governess, who is described as one of the persons who make civilization possible, and silences everyone on Christmas morning by producing a card from a Duchess. Mrs. THIRKELL usen't to be like this. She was a satirist of the first water. With her, to understand all was to forgive nothing. Her point of view was uncompromising, but earls and their butlers, farmers, clerics, artists and cottagers all suffered alike. She revelled in agonizing humour and did not overlook tenderness. But in this new book the *Marlings*, the *Leslies* and the *Pomfrets*—how beautiful they are, the lordly ones!—are a race apart, while evacuees, Russians, Bloomsbury intellectuals and Fighting French are not only impossible but

inexcusable. The events of the book sag with the characters. There are only a few moments when Mrs. THIRKELL makes you remember that she wrote *Summer Half and The Brandons*: "Turk's off hunting," said Captain Barclay, with the easy optimism of one who is not a dog-owner," is one, and so is the incident where the odious Mrs. Smith revives the dying hen with her host's brandy, and the visit of the Fighting French Corporal. But Barsetshire is becoming very flat country.

P. M. K.

### Java Calling

G. K. CHESTERTON, very early in his career, suggested that the full resources of civilization were not implemented until the missionary who taught the Bedouin had himself learnt to ride a camel. The remark was taken at the time for a characteristic piece of pyrotechnics; but we are beginning to learn better. And when Miss H. W. PONDER, an intelligent, graceful and extremely well-informed writer on Java, expresses the hope that the native way of life will flourish long after we barbarians are extinct, few readers of *Javanese Panorama* (SEELEY SERVICE, 21/-) will fail to endorse so sound an aspiration. The Javanese, like the French, have made an art of living. Good food and unlimited washing fill in any gaps left by work and religion; and junketing is provided by weddings and (less magnificently) by funerals. There are drawbacks, of course—the Javanese treatment of animals reflects a wholly unimaginative heartlessness. But "everything we do with machinery the Javanese does by hand." His material is always on the spot. And nothing goes wrong that cannot be put right, from a broken bamboo fence to a tornado-flattened rice-crop. It is reassuring to find that the Japanese, not the Dutch, have imported what shoddy has been imported into Java. May the import pass with the importer. H. P. E.

### Thriller of the Himalayas

What particularly distinguishes *Secret Mission* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 8/6) from the ruck of good thrillers is the fact that its excitements take place against a background of Himalayan scenery sketched in by an author who knows its smallest detail—and its widest wonder. Mr. FRANK S. SMYTHE, naturally, like almost every thriller-writer before him, has a professor among his characters; and the professor has invented a projectile so cunning that it would put mastery of the world into the hands of the nation that possessed it. When *Professor Wilberforce*, fearing that his creation will be used to make war rather than promote peace, flies with his airwoman daughter to an unknown Himalayan valley, the Germans discover the fact, and a very nasty selection of Hitler's best men are soon on his track. From the British side come *Tom Trevanion*, who tells the tale, and a quaint little parson called *Pendelbury*. Mountaineering affords thrills such as stories of this type seldom know, and the threatening flashing beauty of Everest and his fellows will charm readers to whom commonplace thrills offer little attraction.

B. E. S.

### Daniel Come To Judgment

"Hitler and the forces which have rallied to him have placed the Jewish question in the forefront of world-politics, and rendered it more acute than it had ever been." Round this text it may be said that Professor L. B. NAMIER has artfully collected his studies in contemporary history—*Conflicts* (MACMILLAN, 8/6). He ejects a devastating analysis of the unlovely German Psyche, follows the ramifying parasitisms of the German "International" concealed

beneath affected loyalty to other nations acting as host, and traverses the current argument about the good and kindly individual German by demonstrating the permanence of a characteristic national pattern—HITLER himself being the prototype. His real interest, however, is not in the impact of Germanism on the world at large, for he uses his uncommon knowledge of Russian and Polish history as a lure to draw on the reader to interested consideration of the matter that really concerns him—the post-war prospects for the development of the Jewish national home in Palestine. On this he will hear of no compromise, and, conscious of an immense dead weight not only of opposition from the enemies of Zionism but even more of helpless immobility on the part of his fellow Jews in ravaged Europe, he is reaching forward towards some hope and some help from whatever powers or parties may control earth's destinies after the Allies' victory. His essays are gloomy in tone and sometimes too short to allow of adequate approach to immense topics, but they add insight to clarity, and conviction to insight.

C. C. P.

### A Sort of Galatea

Miss OLIVE HIGGINS PROUTY has taken the title of her new novel, *Now Voyager* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 8/6), from WALT WHITMAN's lines—"Untold want, by life and land ne'er granted, now, Voyager, sail thou forth to seek and find." Before the sailing her heroine, *Charlotte Vane*, had been harried into dowdiness and a mental home by the overriding personality of her mother. After the first part of the cure she was advised to go for a cruise, so she borrowed some clothes, discarded her glasses, had a hair-cut, managed to take an actress friend's reservations in a ship, and was then too shy for some time to say that she was not *Renée Beauchamp*. Readers who have reached so far will not be surprised when she meets a strong (though far from silent) unhappily married man, who continues the cure by giving her a bottle of *Quelques Fleurs*. From that moment *Charlotte* blossoms—almost literally too, for he calls her *Camille*. There follows a romantic friendship, made firmer by the fact that he too has had a mental breakdown. The rest of the plot must not be given away. There is one really amusing chapter and one full of sound psychology, but these are not enough to balance the story. B. E. B.





## Mrs. Battlegate and Economy

"ECONOMY," said Mrs. Battlegate—and she then repeated the word three times.

"Economy, economy, economy," she said.

It was really a kind of contradiction in terms, because everybody had heard and understood the word the first time. It is always possible to hear Mrs. Battlegate at practically any distance, and most of us had known about economy long before we knew about Mrs. Battlegate, who only brought the General to live in Little Fiddle-on-the-Green in the late spring of nineteen hundred and twenty-one.

None the less, Cousin Florence replied that, "say what you like, we shall all land up in the workhouse"—("Poor-law Institution," said Miss Pin)—and Aunt Emma, more vigorously, asserted that no one, not one soul in the whole of the British Empire, understood and practised economy as she did herself. She had insisted upon hot water instead of early morning tea, both for herself and Uncle Egbert, and had closed down the spare bedroom altogether, thus—Aunt Emma's own phrase—reducing entertainment to a minimum.

"A recent strange experience has brought the subject prominently before me," said Mrs. Battlegate—and no one could have mistaken her intention of telling us about the strange experience in full. Personally, one fell into metaphysical speculation as to whether Mrs. Battlegate, for mysterious reasons known only to fate, really does undergo a larger number of strange experiences than do the rest of us, or whether her experiences merely assume a character of strangeness in the process of narration.

"... the answer was therefore an affirmative. Emphatically so," said Mrs. Battlegate—and emphatically was indeed the word. "This," I said to the General, 'is the only accommodation available. You are here on business of national importance, and therefore "The Crown and Sceptre" it must be.'

"And 'The Crown and Sceptre' it was," murmured Laura, taking the words straight out of Mrs. Battlegate's mouth and getting quite a look from Mrs. Battlegate in return.

"Both the General and I were aware that it was the more expensive of the two hotels in Bottleby St. Ham—since I do not count 'The Blue Lion'—and we ascertained, naturally, the price of a double bedroom and two

breakfasts before making the final booking. The General's business, I may say, was not expected to take more than a single evening—nor did it.

"We dined in comfort at an early hour; the General went out to keep his appointment (to say anything more definite would amount to playing Hitler's game for him), and I remained in the lounge and was enabled to offer a number of suggestions to an elderly clergyman who seemed to have no natural aptitude for the crossword puzzle. In due course the General returned, and after some conversation we retired, since the General—again from motives of economy—no longer takes his final whisky-and-soda in the evening."

Laura asked when he *did* take it, but the question was rhetorical and remained unanswered, and Mrs. Battlegate swept on, taking us with her.

We learned that the bags were packed and the bill paid and departure from "The Crown and Sceptre" imminent when something suddenly told Mrs. Battlegate to look at the receipted bill.

"The moment I looked at it I realized that twice twelve-and-sixpence cannot total thirty-eight shillings. I instantly pointed this out to the General, reminding him at the same time that 'The Crown and Sceptre' had distinctly stated its terms: twelve shillings and sixpence for bed and breakfast, for each person. There had therefore been a miscalculation in the bill, unaccountably overlooked by the General when paying it."

Aunt Emma said, rather absently, that we were all of us liable to error, and Miss Pin expressed a hope that the General and Mrs. Battlegate had claimed, and obtained, a refund.

"It is well known," said Mrs. Battlegate, "that one of our greatest national heroes was afraid of cats, and another, I believe, turned faint at the sight of blood. The General has a peculiar dislike, almost amounting to alarm, for any kind of dispute. I had the greatest difficulty in inducing him to go back to the desk with the bill, to point out to the young woman there that twice twelve-and-sixpence, even with the addition of a ten-per-cent. gratuity, could not amount to thirty-eight shillings, and that we had therefore been overcharged to the extent of twelve shillings and twopence."

A short calculation, worked out by

some of Mrs. Battlegate's hearers with a pencil on the edges of the newspaper, and by others with the help of their fingers only, proved how right her figures were.

"You will say at once: 'Then the General came back with twelve shillings and twopence.' But," said Mrs. Battlegate, "you are mistaken. He came back—as before—with the receipted bill and nothing else."

Laura said that it hardly seemed worth while to have gone to the desk just for that.

Cousin Florence only said that it was always the same thing. One went to one's bank and pointed out that they'd made a mistake in saying one was overdrawn, and it invariably turned out that they hadn't. Absolutely invariably.

"In this case," said Mrs. Battlegate, "the hotel clerk had omitted to specify, as a separate item, the dinner that we had had on the evening of our arrival, and had merely added it to the total sum due. The oversight was, of course, entirely her own."

It is characteristic of Mrs. Battlegate's dominating personality that nobody present contradicted her. Yet it turned out afterwards that everybody had disagreed with her conclusion.

E. M. D.

## Interview

"BEG pardon, Corp . . ."

"Well, airman?"

"I didn't get no pay."

"Well, why didn't you go up when your name was called?"

"Never called it."

"What is your name?"

"068 'Odges."

"What trade?"

"Baker's roundsman."

"Your Air Force trade, man!"

"On a Course, Corp."

"What Course?"

"Two-two-two."

"Yes, yes, but—oh, well: why weren't you paid with them?"

"Been took orf."

"Why?"

"Gastric stomach. Dropped feet. Took me teef out."

"Who is your N.C.O.?"

"Dunno, Corp."

"A corporal or a sergeant?"

"Middle-sized chap with a moustache. A sergeant, Corp."

"Don't keep calling me 'Corp.'—"

and stand to attention when you speak to an N.C.O."

"It's me feet, Sarge. I seen the officer."

"Don't call me 'Sarge.'"

"Sergeant."

"Or 'Sergeant' either. Can't you count up to two, man?"

"Yes, Sarge—Corp., I mean. Beg pardon."

"What officer did you see?"

"About me feet, Corp."

"Don't call me—! Never mind, what did he say?"

"Said I was to be took orf."

"It was the Medical Officer, then?"

"I seen 'im when they took me teef out."

"It was the Dental Officer you saw, then?"

"No, Corp. I seen 'im before."

"Saw who? Before what?"

"Before they give me a chit to get soft food."

"Where is the chit."

"In me 'dentification card. Lorst it."

"Lost it! What the—! Hold yourself up, man, can't you?"

"It's me stomach."

"You're a disgrace to the Air Force. When did you clean your buttons last?"

"Me tinner polish went."

"Went? Where from?"

"Sider me bed."

"You should take more care of your things. Boot-polish went too, I suppose?"

"That's right."

"From the side of your bed?"

"No, Corp. Topper me locker."

"How have you managed about parades? Don't try to tell me you passed inspection with boots and buttons like that."

"Excused parades. Gotter chit when I seen the officer."

"What officer?"

"Dunno."

"Why don't you get some more polish?"

"Aven't 'ol no pay."

"But you've been paid since you've been here. When were you last paid?"

"Friday fortnight. Spent it."

"Why didn't you spend some of it on polish?"

"Adn't gone then."

"Why don't you get that disgusting uniform cleaned and mended?"

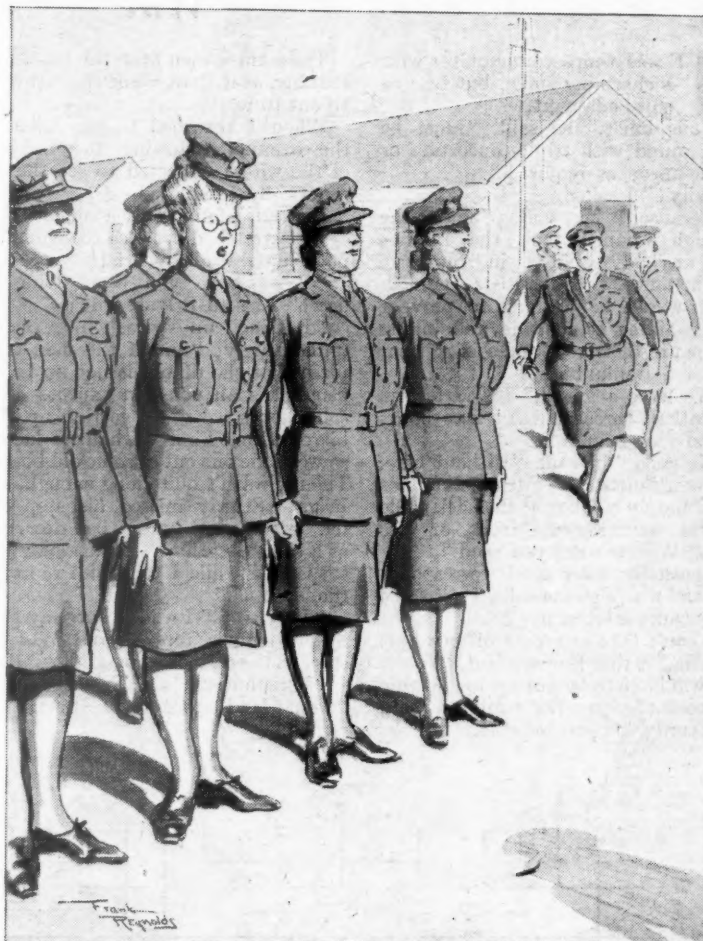
"Only one I got."

"But, good gracious, man, you had a clothing parade last week. Why didn't you get your second suit of blue?"

"Never called me name."

"But haven't you been checked at kit-inspections?"

"Seen the officer. Gotter chit."



#### THE RECRUIT

"Well; I'm sure I don't know. What did you say your name was?"

"'068 'Oedges, Corp."

"Yes. Well . . . Oh, Flight-Sergeant Bedford! Can you do anything for this airman? He wasn't paid to-day."

"What's this, airman?"

"Didn't get no pay."

"Why didn't you go up when your name was called?"

"Never called it."

"What is your name?"

"'068 'Oedges, Flight."

"Don't call me 'Flight'—and stand to attention when you speak to a Senior N.C.O.!"

"It's me feet, Flight. I seen the officer."

"What officer?"

"I seen 'im when they took me teef out, Sarge."

"Don't call me 'Sarge.' Are you blind, man? And hold yourself up—you're a disgrace to the Air Force. When did you last . . ."

" . . . "

" . . . "

" . . . "

#### Cussedness

O I zat up in me bed and laughed Quoite zudden as oi thowt 'ow daft

'Twould be if oi should laugh without A zingle thing to laugh about.

## Wire

**H**E was a nice young officer with a charming smile, but he was quite adamant.

"Your billet," he said, "must be wired round with triple-concertina or double-apron as required."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because," he said, "since the Borough Council took the railings down anybody could get in. Suppose, for instance, parachutists landed. There would be nothing to prevent them walking straight in and killing the men in their beds and seizing their arms and ammunition."

"We have a guard," I said feebly, "or rather, three guards. Two hours on and four hours off."

"No good," he said, "without wire. The parachutists or Fifth Columnists would simply break in at the back while he was watching the front, or vice versa. Wire is what you need."

Eventually, after much correspondence and many phone calls, I got some wire. Quite a lot of it.

"I can't take any men off our hut-building," I told the sergeant, "so the wire will have to be put up by Geordie the cook, Luggie the sanitary man, and Sturdy the potato-peeler."

These three men keep the billet fires burning, as it were, while the rest of us go out to work.

When I returned to the billet on the evening following the delivery of the wire I expected to see the job practically completed.

Instead, I found only a single strand of wire stretched between the chimney-pots, like a wireless aerial.

"What have you been doing all day?" I asked Private Luggie.

"Putting up wire," he replied unblushingly; "and if the men complain that the dinner is not up to the usual, it's all you can expect. Four solid hours we were, getting up that bit of wire. First we had no ladder, so we made one out of some old boards. Then it wasn't quite long enough, and Private Sturdy missed his step and fell with what may be described as a sickening thud. Operations were suspended while I took him round to the M.O. . . ."

"Very well," I said, "but why start by putting wire on the roof? Why not start on the easy bits, round the walls?"

"Parachutists," said Private Luggie, "would land on the roof. It stands to reason."

Next day I ignored the huts we were supposed to build and put all the men on wiring. Sergeant Hiccough certainly did the job thoroughly. When I tried to get out to go to lunch I could not find an exit, and in the end had to borrow a pair of wire-cutters.

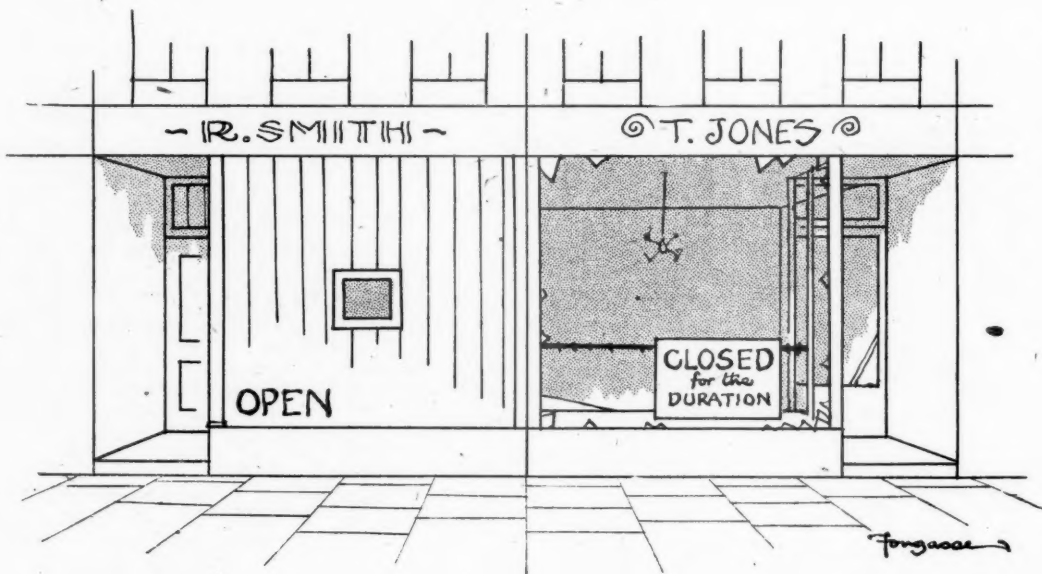
There was a lot of trouble over the wiring. The Vicar complained that his people could not get into the church, as the men had included the church (which adjoined our billet) in what the sergeant grandly referred to as "the perimeter." Other people complained that their back gates had been sealed up or their coal-holes rendered inaccessible.

And the irony of it all is that I have just had notice that the billet is to be used as a school again, and that we are to remove elsewhere, taking all our military stores with us.

Difficult as the wire was to put up, I have a feeling it will be even more difficult to take down.

### Impending Apology

"I would like to thank most heartily the writer, who deserves to remain anonymous."  
Parish Magazine.



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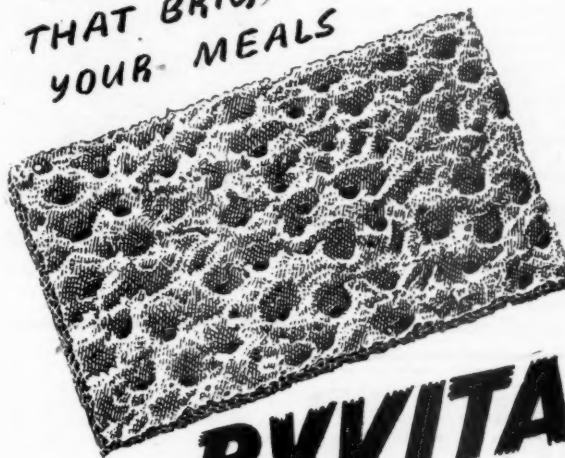
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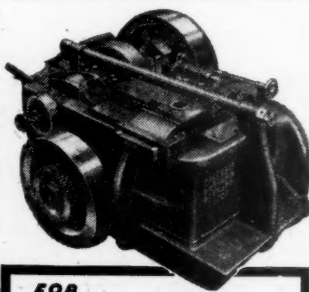
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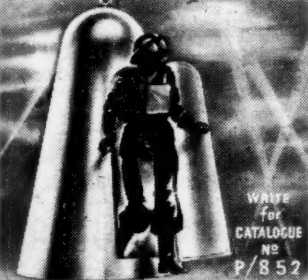
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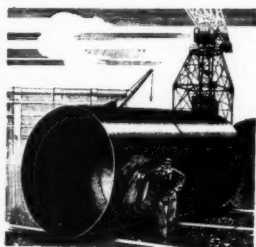
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